DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 403 236 SP 037 096

AUTHOR Dottin, Erskine S.
TITLE Education as a Human Enterprise: What Was, Is, and Ought To Be.
PUB DATE Sep 96
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at a Meeting of the Institute of Retired Persons (Miami, FL, September 11, 1996).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Educational Change; *Educational Objectives; Educational Philosophy; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Global Approach; *Humanistic Education; *School Role
IDENTIFIERS Goals 2000

ABSTRACT

This paper looks at the educational thought system that provides a contextual understanding of education, discusses what schools are for, and presents a vision for education. A review of educational literature reveals an ongoing search for a new educational paradigm and focuses on a transformed conception of teaching that shifts the focus from knowledge as commodity to understanding knowledge as a gift to be received, developed, and shared by all. In this context, the primary purpose of education is to actualize human potential rather than to impart an established body of facts and skills. The educational vision operative in the national education goals--"Goals 2000," which ties the purpose of education to national productivity, is contrasted with "Education 2000: A Holistic Perspective." The vision of "Education 2000," articulated in 1991 by the Global Alliance for Transforming Education, espouses optimal human development rather than the traditional industrial/technological world view. Education 2000 is developed around 10 principles, which are listed, along with educational implications. Contains 10 references. (ND)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

SP

ED 403 236

EDUCATION AS A HUMAN ENTERPRISE: WHAT WAS, IS, AND OUGHT TO BE.

By

Erskine S. Dottin
Professor, Educational Foundations
Florida International University
Miami, Florida 33199

A presentation to the members of the Institute of Retired Persons at the University of Miami, Florida, Wednesday, September 11, 1996.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
E. Dottin
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

SB637096

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EDUCATION AS A HUMAN ENTERPRISE:
WHAT WAS, IS, AND OUGHT TO BE

By

Erskine S. Dottin

A presentation to the members of the Institute of Retired Persons at the University of Miami, Florida, Wednesday, September 11, 1996

Introduction

Ladies and gentlemen, I come before you today forewarned by the words of George Bernard Shaw: "There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart's desire. The other is to get it." On the other hand, I am humbled in my comments by John Godfrey Saxe's poignant poetics:

> It was six men of Hindostan
> To learning much inclined,
> Who went to see the elephant, (Though all of them were blind);
> That each by observation
> Might satisfy his mind.
>
> The first approached the elephant,
> And happening to fall
> Against his broad and sturdy side,
> At once began to bawl,
> "Bless me, it seems the elephant
> Is very like a wall."
>
> The second, feeling of his tusk,
> Cried, "Ho! What have we here
> So very round and smooth and sharp?
> To me 'tis mighty clear
> This wonder of an elephant

Is very like a spear."

The third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Then boldly up and spake;
"I see, " quoth he, "the elephant
Is very like a snake."

The fourth stretched out his eager hand
And felt about the knee,
"What most this mighty beast is like
Is might plain," quoth he;
"Tis clear enough the elephant
Is very like a tree."

The fifth who chanced to touch the ear
Said, "Even the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an elephant
Is very like a fan."

The sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," cried he, "the elephant
Is very like a rope."

And so these men of Hindostan
Disputed Loud and Long,
Each of his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

My comments today about education are tempered by my not proposing to have the answer. Instead, my comments are intended to serve as descriptors of the sights and thoughts emanating from my figurative and normative lenses. The descriptions from one angle should, when juxtaposed with those from other angles, facilitate a clearer picture of the human enterprise defined as education.

Edward T. Clark, Jr., the author of Contextual Thinking, contends that getting an education should be " ... like putting together an ever-expanding jigsaw puzzle" (Clark, 1988, p. 26). However, he cautions that: "Every child knows that the first step in putting together a jigsaw puzzle is to look at the picture because it is the picture that tells you what to look for and how the pieces fit together" (Clark, 1988, p. 26). Clark makes this "picture window" approach to education analogous to building a house in which the building block for the house would be the blueprints and not the furniture. Putting the pieces together then suggests that one first needs to know the "big picture" or "thought system" which like the blueprints will enable one to see how the "facts" or "furniture," the "basic ideas" or "walls and room dividers," the "concepts" or "framing" can be organized, used, or selected. Based on the work of Clark, it is safe to suggest that whether one is talking about past and present, the organization and structure of curriculum content, or of an address such as this, one is making relationships between information (i.e., the pieces of the

puzzle), and knowledge (the big picture).

I want to talk today, therefore, about the educational thought system that provides me contextual understanding, discuss the salient concern about what are schools for? and leave you with a vision for education.

New Educational Paradigm

I find a working definition of education given by Van Cleve Morris (1972) to be a good contextual starting point. He contends that "Education is the ... bridge **between** truth and persons (Walberg & Kopan, 1972, p. 292). Given that definition it is a natural extension to see teaching and learning as phenomena of linkage. Understanding and explaining what happens when knowledge and the person are brought together is therefore the phenomenon of education. Of course, George Bernard Shaw's dictum to "never let schooling get in the way of one's education" is poignant in that it brings home very forcefully a salient distinction between education, as defined earlier, and schooling which is used synonymously by many to mean education.

Edward J. Power, in his book, **Philosophy of Education: Studies in Philosophies, Schooling, and Educational Policies** (1990), helps to make the distinction between education and schooling much clearer. He points out that:

> Education is a lifelong process... [it] begins with birth and continues

> throughout life.... much of education is informal and incidental. Schooling, [on the other hand], is direct and limited in ambit (p. 226).

To raise the issue of the distinction between schooling and education is intended simply as a reminder that in the United States education has been seen as a panacea, though imperfect panacea, according such educational historians as Henry J. Perkinson. When education is made synonymous with schooling the ill effect may be that schools get burdened with obligations and responsibilities too great for their formal academic function, and education, conceived in broad informal terms, gets pushed on to a Procrustean bed of formal schooling requisites.

May I however return to the analogy of building a house and building knowledge to which I referred previously, and like in the building of the house turn to the blueprint that guides my presentation. I am suggesting that once I lay out my educational blueprint, it will be much easier for me to relate where the joists, studs and framing of schooling belong. This educational blueprint will set the big picture paradigmatic context from which one may find meaning and understanding of the facts and ideas of schooling.

Educational Paradigm or Blueprint

A look at the educational literature indicates that there has been an ongoing search for a new educational paradigm. This paradigmatic shift brings to the fore

the use of this phrase by Thomas Kuhn in his 1962 publication, **The Structure of Scientific Revolutions**. Kuhn points out that:

> a paradigm shift occurs as the result of a shift in the underlying assumptions upon which [a field or discipline, he was referring to science] is based.... the basic assumptions of a discipline shape the research and results of that research. When the evidence begins to challenge these commonly accepted assumptions, anomalies appear. These anomalies create conflicts - conflicts which can only be resolved by acknowledging a new set of assumptions. As these new assumptions gradually gain acceptance, a dramatic shift occurs both in the nature of ... inquiry [in the discipline] and in our understanding of the role of [the discipline] in society (Clark, 1988, p. 18).

The new paradigmatic shift in education views teaching and learning as phenomena of linkage, and, as a result, seeks to understand and explain what happens when knowledge and a person are brought together in an educational experience (Morris, 1972). This paradigmatic view assumes that man/woman cannot be ultimately understood in the same manner that we have come to understand atoms, frogs, and machines. Instead, this view of teaching and learning assumes that the individual is responsible for his/her own knowledge; knowledge that originates in and is composed of what exists in the individual's consciousness and feelings, and as a result of his/her experiences and the projects he/she adopts in the course of his/her life.

To make reference to knowledge is to give rise to a vital epistemological

question, what does it mean to know? The answer to this question, as explored by the existentialist, Jean-Paul Sartre, is lodged in modes of knowing. According to Sartre, objects exist in the world that are independent of consciousness, that may be causally determined, and that are without freedom. To this being of existing things, for example, a chair, a tree, and so on, Sartre assigns the term "being-in-itself." In other words, these things are the objects of consciousness, and are regarded as being independent of consciousness. To know these objects, according to Sartre, is a mode one manner of knowing.

On the other hand, knowing from a mode two perspective is the domain of conscious beings. To be a conscious being is:

> To be aware of the gap between my consciousness and its objects; it is to be in the world, and yet to be aware of not being one of the causally determined objects of the world; it is to be aware of a distance, an emptiness, a gap that separates me from the region of things (Lavine, 1984, p. 353).

Existential epistemology, therefore, suggests that conscious beings (humans) come to know, at one level (mode one), by being conscious of an existential world of objects, events, and things. However, conscious beings are separated from objects, and casually determined things because conscious beings are conscious of their consciousness of this existential world (mode two).

Science initially took as its subject matter, to know the physical world (mode

one). Around 1900, it stumbled on man [man/woman in the generic sense]. As a result, an explosive proliferation of human sciences emerged beginning with the social sciences (economics, political science, sociology), and were augmented later by the behavioral sciences (psychology, social psychology, cultural anthropology). This mode one human science manner of knowing assumes that man can be ultimately understood in the same way that we have come to understand atoms, frogs, and machines, namely through the scientific method.

Existential epistemology, mode two, on the other hand, assumes that the individual is responsible for his/her own knowledge. Existential knowledge is "intuitive," it is human. It originates in, and is composed of what exists in the individual's consciousness and feelings, and as a result of his/her experiences, and the projects he/she adopts in the course of his/her life.

This form of existential epistemology has been given further credence through the philosophical lenses of phenomenology (that is, the theory of phenomena or the study of mode two knowing). Phenomenologists such as Husserl, Marcel, Merleau-Ponty conclude that knowledge comes into existence when consciousness ("being-for-itself") apprehends the qualities of the world ("being-in-itself") through phenomena. Meanings, therefore, according to this world view, are not in and of the world; man/woman as consciousness beings put them there. In short,

man/woman creates meanings. In man's "lived world," he endows a meaningless world with meanings. In the process, he gives meaning to his own existence.

The traditional Cartesian scientific view which has dominated our ways of knowing has come to be considered as the authentic form of knowledge since science is concerned with the explanation and prediction of observable events (Kincheloe, 1991). This scientific method was applied not only to the physical world, but also to the study of human beings. However, a paradigm shift has occurred in the human sciences as researchers recognized that the complexities of human beings require a methodology different from one that is needed to conduct the study of inanimate objects or things. In order to capture lived experiences (which includes such human phenomena as teaching, learning, etc.) human science cannot be bound by methodological criteria of natural science.

An existential epistemology transcends the study of observable behaviors common in natural scientific psychology, and moves toward an understanding of human experience. This understanding may be facilitated by a merging of existential philosophy (a focus on the concrete existence of the individual person) with phenomenology (a rigorous and unbiased study of things as they appear) in order to arrive at an essential understanding of human experience.

From an existential perspective, within a phenomenological internal frame of reference, individuals are not machines, caught up in the grasp of unconscious motives. Instead, human beings embody subjective freedom, and are in the process of creating themselves, and creating meaning in life (Rogers, 1964). Whereas traditional science views people as separated from their environment, existential phenomoenology speaks of the total indissoluble unity or interrelationship of the individual and his or her world; the person is viewed as having no existence apart from the world, and the world as having no existence apart from the persons. Each individual and his/her world coconstitute one another, as existence always implies that being is actually "being in the world"(Heidegger, 1962). There exists a dual and cyclical character since persons are being shaped and giving shape to the world simultaneously.

This new educational paradigm, grounded in the foregoing blueprint, gives direction to the kind of educational experience that occurs within a context of connections that are close, personal, intensive, gracious, compassionate, just, enduring, mutually beneficial; an experience, that is, in one word, intimate. Education, from this paradigm, supports the development of intimate relationships across multiple dimensions of learning: intrapersonal learning (relational experiences promoting full development and integration of mind/heart/body/spirit); interpersonal

learning (experiencing intimacy on a person to person basis, building connections that build community); and transpersonal learning (connecting in life-affirming ways with non-human entities and broader social and physical systems and forces). As each individual is complexly connected to the whole of humanity and non-human nature, deep knowing is both intensely personal and fundamentally communal.

This transformed conception of teaching and learning shifts the focus from knowledge as commodity to understanding knowledge as gift to be received, developed and shared by all. In this view, learning involves deriving personal meaning from intense, complex, and multi-dimensional experience. It is through full engagement in such a process that each individual's identity as a uniquely gifted self can emerge. Processes of teaching and learning centered on the metaphor of "gift" defy passivity and uniformity, and challenge current conceptions of predictability and control.

What Are Schools For?

Should the primary purpose of education be to enhance the economic and technological capacity of the nation so that we can compete with other nations and ultimately defeat them? In other words, is the school's primary purpose to impart an established body of facts and skills? Or should the purpose of education be, as prescribed by the new educational paradigm, more a drawing forth human potentials

and less a handing down of prescribed facts and skills? The pursuit for answers to the foregoing questions of purpose should not take place devoid of the current realities of schooling. The plethora of educational reform reports within the past fifteen years have brought to the fore the crisis in education in America. The statistics regarding teenage pregnancies, juvenile crime, drug abuse, abound. Yet like the proverbial idea of Rome burning while Nero sings, the educational solutions proposed, in many cases, are grounded more on national productivity and less on enhancing human development. Take for example, some findings from the recent education summit held in Miami, hosted by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce. The summit's participants included a good cross-section of educators and members of the business community. To quote from a draft summit report:

> ... the quality of our schools is an issue fundamental to our future and to the quality of life of our young people.... the primary purpose of education is to prepare students to flourish in a democratic society and to work successfully in their communities and in a global economy.... business leaders understand that their companies can be successful and our South Florida community can be economically viable only if we have a well educated, literate citizenry entering the workforce.....We are united by our civic responsibilities to see that all students are able to perform to their highest potential, and we have a common interest in securing a prosperous future for our companies in the 21st century, and for our young people who will determine that future. Today's business environment demands that all youngsters, whether they are college bound or are moving directly into the workforce from high school, have high levels of skill and a vital common core of knowledge indispensable to an educated citizen functioning in 21st century

America.

The Summit's conclusion: "... every child, whether or not college bound, should graduate from high school with a rigorous academic common core of knowledge in a foreign language, mathematics, science, history, literature, and the related social studies, all with a proficiency in reading and writing." This is translated in the equation, a good education equals a rigorous academic core for every student. But, alas, here in lies the rub! First, as I will share in a moment, that educational equation is not new. Second, the epistemological base of the equation is in line with the traditional educational paradigm that is not interested in differences, but rather in "... general tendencies, plottable regularities, and universal laws that embrace the group, the class, the subset or the genus" (Morris, 1972). While the reform call, at the Summit, was even layered by a call for a liberal arts/humanities curriculum for all, it is clear that push was for a more cognition-oriented education rather than a more awareness-oriented education.

But cognition-oriented education attempts to render feelings and awareness cognitive. In fact, the educational philosopher Van Cleve Morris contends:

> Although the name by which we call them sounds as if they are more "human," the humanities are like the sciences in that they are, ... , "generic prone." The humanities -- art, music, philosophy, history, literature, religion -- seek the overall meaning of life; they stretch out in the direction of generic principles of the nature of man and the ultimate

aim of the human endeavor (Morris, 1972, p. 289).

The new emergent educational humanistic/holistic paradigm to which I have alluded earlier focuses on individual differences. It assumes that knowledge is intuitive, it is human, and originates in, and is composed of what exists in the individual's consciousness and feelings, and as a result of his/her experiences, and the projects he/she adopts in the course of his/her life. Learning may then be construed as the acquisition of personal meaning. Reform calls from this paradigm would not be for a more cognition-oriented education, but instead for a more awareness-oriented education.

It becomes easier to see, if one thinks of a world view as a cultural mind set, why there is an inherent conflict between the traditional educational paradigm, and the new holistic paradigm. A quick perusal of the historical literature dramatizes this point. Indeed, American education from the traditional paradigm might be summed up in the following themes: moral training (under colonial rule, 1600s-1770s); responsible citizenshipfor new nationhood (1770s-1870s); cultural uniformity (1870s-1910s); the advancement of industrialism (1910's-1940s); and enhanced economic opportunity (1940s to the present). No matter the thematic focus, the educational quest was objective truth; initially guided by theology's metaphysical, and epistemological assertions about reality and truth, and later by the

premises of the scientific method. No where in this paradigm was subjective experience deemed germane to education.

By adhering to the great genius of scientific positivism, that is, understandings that cover not just isolated instances but whole sets of instances taken together; understandings that help us manage our experience much better and provide a method of knowing which makes possible the prediction and control of events, American education thus may be seen through an array of psychological measurements. Raymond Callahan's book, **Education and The Cult of Efficiency** offers an excellent description of the use of measurements for routinizing schools and learning at the early part of the 20th century. Student intelligence, from this scientistic perspective, is a mathematically identifiable quotient, IQ, that is based on the assumption that intelligence is a fixed amount which can be measured by a mathematical formula. This story about intelligence is told in American education by Lewis Terman and Alfred Binet during the early part of the 20th century, by Arthur Jensen in the 1960s and in the 1990's by Murray and Hernstein in their book, **The Bell Curve**.

The nature of learning, like intelligence, has been perceived in American education generally to be something that is measurable. Instructional objectives become behavioral, and all learning is reduced to that which can be measured.

Education becomes a system of testing based almost entirely on those learnings that can be demonstrated and quantified. As a result, certain areas of the human enterprise, such as appreciating, enjoying, believing, tacit knowing, are discarded to the heap of ritualistic communion or converted to measurable behaviors. Again American education is replete with efforts to make learning as a change in behavior more efficient. Measures that are correlated with beefed up test scores are framed as effective teaching practices. The teacher as manager of learning becomes the appropriate educational metaphor instead of the teacher and students as persons. For learning to be managed, one must assume that learning is objective.

The teacher as manager of learning metaphor gives rise to seeing teachers as purveyors of knowledge. Many of the criticisms leveled at American education recently, whether it be from the Council of Basic Education, the "back to basics" call, or the President Reagan's initiative through the report **Nation At Risk**, is about this purveying of knowledge or lack thereof.

The new educational paradigm shift rather than seeing the teacher as a dispenser of information and knowledge, assumes that the innate capacity of students is critical and as a result the teacher must be a gardener whose responsibility is to nurture growing children so that the innate potential of each organism is allowed to blossom and bear fruit.

The humanistic education approach as framed by the new paradigm seeks to balance intellectual, cognitive development with emotional, affective development, hence the idea of a holistic educational experience. Making intellectualism the primary endeavor of education is to place the focus of education only on the external material world. Reading, writing, and counting, familiarity with subject matter, knowledge of scientific or academic interpretive techniques enable a person to deal more effectively with the natural environment and social convention. And, of course, this is useful. But what of the Socratic imperative to "know thyself?" Where in a traditional academic education does a person learn about the organic and emotional sources of his/her own attitudes and perceptions? How does one establish meaning and values?

Shouldn't education give students the opportunity and the skills to integrate academic learning with personal meaning and purpose? Shouldn't the purpose of education be to activate and develop the latent potentials of each person instead of to prepare the individual for a limited set of tasks as determined by the culture?

Educational Vision

Someone once said that "everything about schooling - curriculum, teaching method, discipline, interpersonal relationships - teaches children about the human qualities we value." The educational vision we hold, a vision which incorporates

the foregoing elements schooling and pedagogy, therefore, reveals the human qualities we value.

This revelation is most poignant in the nation's Educational Goals 2000 Vision. These national educational goals call for the following:

1. By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn. [school readiness]
2. By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent. [school completion]
3. By the year 2000, United States students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, arts, history, and geography, and every school in the United States will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so students may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation's modern economy. [student achievement and citizenship]
4. By the year 2000, United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement. [mathematics and science]
5. By the year 2000, every adult United States citizen will be literate and

will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. [adult literacy and lifelong learning]

6. By the year 2000, every school in the United States will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning. [safe, disciplined and drug-free schools]

This vision being pushed by President Clinton seems grounded in traditional paradigm assumptions about students, teaching and learning, and so on. The purpose of education being tied to national productivity is quite explicit.

On the other hand, there is Education 2000: A Holistic Perspective a vision articulated in 1991 by Global Alliance for Transforming Education. This vision is premised on the recognition that the traditional industrial/technological world view is inadequate to address the serious problems affecting modern educational systems. This vision espouses optimal human development, and sees education in the context of our "caring enough to draw forth the greatness that is within each unique person." The framers of this vision felt that for education to move to the forefront and become a respected an integral part of any community, there must be an ongoing dialogue. To facilitate that dialogue, Education 2000 is developed around 10 principles. May I conclude my presentation today by offering you these principles

for your ongoing dialogue on the conversation about education. For some of the principles I will suggest some educational implications. My hope is that you will be forthcoming with your perceived implications:

Principle 1: the primary--indeed the fundamental--purpose of education is to nourish the inherent possibilities of human development.

Implication: Schools that see their function as facilitating the development of effective human beings see persons as subjects and not objects; see learning as the acquisition of personal meaning; see the need to enhance the response-ability and autonomy of learners; and foster caring and cooperative learning environments.

Principle 2: each learner--young and old--must be recognized as unique and valuable.

Implication: Schools must give more attention to such work as that on multiple intelligences by Howard Gardner, on emotional intelligence by Daniel Goleman. Authentic assessment must take priority over grading and standardized testing. It must be recognized that assigning labels, such as, "at-risk," "minority," and so on, does not describe a learner's personal potentials, it simply defines a person in relation to the arbitrary expectations of the system.

Principle 3: education is a matter of experience.

Implication: Experiential approaches are needed that facilitate the learner's

connection to the workings of the social world and concurrently acquaint him/her with the realm of his/her own inner world, for without knowledge of the inner self, all outward knowledge is shallow and without purpose.

Principle 4: wholeness is a prerequisite in the educational process and a requirement for the transformation of educational institutions and policies needed to attain this wholeness.

Implication: Learning should be guided by the idea that the sum of the parts is greater than the whole. Consequently, subjects should be studied in a holistic manner and not as fragmented separate knowledge bases. Educational structures must therefore be congruent with this idea.

Principle 5: there must be a new understanding of the role of the teacher.

Implication: Educators should be facilitators of learning which is an organic natural process and not a product that can be turned out on demand. Teachers must be viewed as professionals characterized by qualities of vision, training, responsibility and accountability.

Principle 6: there must be meaningful opportunities for real choice at every stage of the learning process.

Implication: Students should be allowed authentic choices in their learning.

Families should have access to a diverse range of educational options in the public school systems.

Principle 7: a truly democratic model of education empowers all citizens to participate in meaningful ways in the life of the community and the planet.

Implication: Schools must take on tasks such as enhancing critical and independent thinking; fostering a sense of justice, compassion for others, and the recognition of shared human needs.

Principle 8: each of us is a global citizen.

Implication: Multi cultural understanding should flow from the development of self in diverse situations and contexts.

Principle 9: education must spring organically from a profound reverence for life in all its forms.

Implication: A sick planet does not support healthy children.

Principle 10: all people are spiritual beings in human form who express their individuality through their talents, abilities, intuition, and intelligence.

Implication: School experience must enhance the most valuable part of a person, his/her inner subjective life - the self or the soul. In the words of Martin Buber, the school should enhance I-Thou relationships.

Neil Postman, author of **The End of Education: Redefining the Value of**

School, brings up the old saying that "all children enter school as question marks, and leave as period." He, however, suggests that American schools really are about the business of telling a story about America. He proposes that the story of America be told as an experiment, a perpetual and fascinating question mark. The basic question posed by the American experiment, he contends is can a nation be formed, maintained, and preserved on the principle of continuous argumentation? If the salient phrase is continuous argumentation, then the themes in the story, such as what is freedom, what are its limits, and so on must be continually argued. Since the answers to the questions are still open ended, it means that as Postman says, in the American story we need conceal nothing from ourselves, no shame need endure for ever, no accomplishment merits excessive pride. All is fluid and subject to change, to better arguments, to the results of future experiments.

I have raised with you one of those these, what is it to be human, and therefore what worldview is most conducive to the education of that human being. My only fear is, as Postman cautions, that someone will insist on putting in an exclamation point to my argument, when in effect I am not yet finished developing it.

Thank you very much for inviting me.

REFERENCES

Clark, E.T. Jr. (1988). The search for a new educational paradigm: The implications of new assumptions about thinking and learning. In Holistic Education Review, 1(1), Spring, pp. 18-30.

Heidegger, M. (1962). Being and time. New York: Harper & Row.

Kincheloe, J. (1991). Teachers as researchers: Qualitative inquiry as a path to empowerment. New York: Falmer.

Lavine, T.Z. (1984). From Socrates to Sartre: The philosophic quest. New York: Bantam Books.

Miller, R. (1992). What are schools for? Holistic education in American culture. Brandon, VT.: Holistic Education Press.

Morris, V.C. (1972). Phenonemology and urban teacher education. In Rethinking urban education (Eds.). Herbert J. Walberg & Andrew T. Kopan. Jossey-Bass, Inc.: San Francisco.

Power, E.J. (1990). Philosophy of education: Studies in philosophies, schooling, and educational policies. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.

Rogers, C. (1964). Toward a science of the person. In Behaviorism and phenomenology: Contrasting bases for modern psychology (Ed.). T.W. Wann. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Walberg, H.J. & Kopan, A.T. (Eds.). (1972) Rethinking urban education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.